



Shaping the Future of Brain Injury  
Nebraska Brain Injury Advisory Council

July 29, 2016 marks the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the TBI Act of 1996 (P.L. 104-166). The law created a state grant program to improve access to health and other services for individuals with traumatic brain injury (TBI). Nebraska has competed successfully for these grants since the beginning with help from the Brain Injury Advisory Council, using grant funds to improve statewide services for individuals impacted by TBI and their families. The law was most recently reauthorized on November 26, 2014, providing continued grant funding through FY 2019.

Traumatic brain injury (TBI) is a serious public health problem in the United States. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reports approximately 1.7 million people sustain a TBI annually, and each year TBI contributes to a substantial number of deaths and cases of permanent disability. A TBI is caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head or a penetrating head injury that disrupts the normal function of the brain. Most TBIs are mild and their effects diminish over time, but even a mild TBI can result in permanent cognitive, physical and behavioral changes. Individuals experiencing moderate to severe injuries may require life-long supports for housing, work and community living.

Many Nebraskans impacted by TBI struggle to access appropriate services to help them live full, productive lives in their communities, like training and technology to compensate for memory problems, employment supports, or a case manager to help plan for the next steps. Nebraska VR and the Brain Injury Advisory Council are committed to helping build a statewide system of information, services and support for individuals experiencing brain injury and to ensuring awareness and training for families, service providers and the general public.

During July, Nebraska VR and the Brain Injury Advisory Council will celebrate the TBI Act's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary by spotlighting state TBI grant activities and Council members helping to "shape the future" of brain injury. To receive these notices and future updates, join the Council's mailing list at [www.braininjury.ne.gov](http://www.braininjury.ne.gov).

For more information contact Keri Bennett, Nebraska VR at (308) 865-5012 or [keri.bennett@nebraska.gov](mailto:keri.bennett@nebraska.gov).

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## COUNCIL MEMBER SPOTLIGHT:

Dale Johannes is a long-time advocate for brain injury. He has testified before the legislature and encouraged lawmakers to lay the groundwork for statewide services in Nebraska.

A brain injury 28 years ago changed Dale's future when a pickup he was riding in was hit by another vehicle. Dale's experience and perspective have helped to shape the future of brain injury for others.

Dale joined the Older Adults Committee of the Brain Injury Advisory Council. Dale says, "The elderly population experiences the highest rate of injury of any group because of falls."

The committee has been instrumental in supporting Area Agency on Aging screening to document the number of lifetime brain injuries that have occurred among older adults. [Read the results in the 2016 report.](#)

A brochure adapted from the Center for Disease Control, [Traumatic Brain Injury in Older Adults](#) lists brain injury symptoms and tips on preventing falls. The brochure has been distributed to Area Agency on Aging offices across the state and is available at the annual brain injury conference.



Dale Johannes & son Zach  
Thank you Dale for helping shape the future of brain injury in Nebraska!